

Highlights Of Vietnam And Myanmar - 12 Days

Brief Itinerary:

Day 1: Hanoi arrival (D)

Day 2: Hanoi city tour (B)

Day 3: Hanoi – Halong bay on cruise (B, L, D)

Day 4: Halong bay – Hanoi – fly to Ho Chi Minh city (B, Br)

Day 5: Ho Chi Minh – city tour and Cu Chi tunnels (B)

Day 6: Ho Chi Minh – Mekong delta excursion (B, L)

Day 7: Ho Chi Minh – fly to Yangon – city tour (B)

Day 8: Yangon – fly to Bagan (B)

Day 9: Bagan temple tour (B)

Day 10: Bagan – fly to Heho – Inle Lake (B)

Day 11: Inle Lake – Insein (B)

Day 12: Inle Lake – Heho – fly to Yangon – Departure (B)

Remark:

B= Breakfast, **L** = Lunch, **D** = Dinner

Tour includes:

- Accommodation based on **twin/double sharing room** with daily breakfast
- Vietnam visa approval letter
- Experienced station English speaking guides as indicated in the itinerary
- Private transportation with AC
- Flight tickets Hanoi – Ho Chi Minh, Ho Chi Minh – Yangon, Yangon – Bagan, Bagan – Heho, Heho – Yangon

- All sightseeing tickets
- Lunches and dinners as indicated in the itinerary
- Taxes and services charges

Tour excludes:

- International flight tickets and airport tax
- Visa stamping fee
- Early check in and late check out
- Drinks, gratuities and personal expenses
- Insurance

Detail itinerary:

Day 1: Hanoi arrival – Airport pick up (D)

Upon arrival, tour guide and driver of S Vietnam Travel will welcome you. Tour briefing and transfer to city centre. After a short break, you will have chance to enjoy cyclo tour around Hoan Kiem lake and attend water puppet show – one of Vietnamese traditional performance.

In the evening, enjoy welcome dinner at the local restaurant.

Day 2: Hanoi city tour (B)

Enjoy breakfast at hotel then start a guided city tour of Hanoi. Having celebrated its 1000- year anniversary in 2010, the city has a rich and fascinating history. Your city tour will take you to the main attractions of Hanoi, including Ho Chi Minh

complex (Ho Chi Minh's mausoleum and stilt house; the Presidential Palace and the nearby One Pillar Pagoda), the Temple of Literature, West lake, Tran Quoc pagoda, and of the city's museum (History Museum or Ethnology Museum).

Day 3: Hanoi – Halong bay (B, L, D)

At 9 am, your driver will pick you up for the journey to Halong Bay and arrive at around midday to board a traditional junk for an overnight cruise. Halong Bay is widely considered to be one of the natural wonders of the world. Thousands of towering pillars of sea and wind-carved limestone karst make the bay an unforgettable sight. After lunch, explore some of the huge limestone caves dotted around the bay and visit a floating fishing village. Then the captain will find a secluded spot where you can swim, soak up the sun on the top deck. In the evening enjoy a seafood feast for dinner.

Day 4: Halong Bay – Hanoi – fly to Ho Chi Minh (B)

Enjoy an early morning swim (during the summer), followed by breakfast as you cruise through more spectacular scenery. The cruise arrives at the harbor by noon. The driver will pick you up and then transfer directly to the airport for flight to Ho Chi Minh city. Upon arrival in Ho Chi Minh, you will be transferred to your hotel. Check in and free time.

Day 5: Ho Chi Minh – Cu Chi tunnels and city tour (B)

This morning, you will visit the famous Cu Chi tunnels, an incredible underground tunnel network constructed by Vietnamese resistance fighters during the long struggle for independence. The network included innumerable trap doors, specially constructed living areas, storage facilities, weapons factories, field hospitals, command centers and kitchens.

In the afternoon, back to the city centre for a half day tour Saigon including The Reunification Palace, Notre Dame Cathedral and Old Post Office, Remnant War Museum and Ben Thanh market.

Day 6: Ho Chi Minh – Mekong delta – My Tho – Ben Tre (B, L)

Depart Saigon for My Tho, the capital of Tien Giang Province 72 kms from Saigon. You will take time to visit Vinh Trang pagoda, the most beautiful pagoda of the province with mixture structure of many styles. Then take a boat trip round 4 beautiful islets: Dragon, Unicorn, Phoenix, and Tortoise. These evergreen islands among the Mekong River still remain unknown to many people. You will discover beautiful landscapes along the river and observe the typical Mekong delta rural life.

Stops on the way can be made upon request for particular visits or photos making. Visit traditional house at Quoi An village (all make from coconut). See coconut collection set and how locals make handicrafts from trunk and shell, guests can see that they waste nothing, coconut even useful from wedding to funeral. Enjoy seasonal fruit and listening to traditional music. Take horse cart on village path and stop at Ben Truc orchard, taste honey with tea or Mekong whisky (they have a funny rule for guests to get in). Take rowing-boat on water palm creek. Take

boat to visit coconut candy mill (special product of Ben Tre province). Enjoy fantastic lunch at local restaurant. Back to Saigon in the late afternoon.

Day 7: Ho Chi Minh fly to Yangon – city tour (B)

This morning, you will catch a short flight to Yangon. Upon arrival at the airport you will be warmly welcomed by your guide who will take you to your hotel for check in (note: check in time is 14.00. Early check in is subject to availability).

You'll start things off in the afternoon with a trip to Kyaukhtatgyi Pagoda to see a 70 meter long reclining Buddha statue around the size of a blue whale. Afterwards, you continue uptown in order to make a quick stop by the Royal Lake located in Kandawgyi Park which is very popular with local residents, especially in the early morning and around sunset. Catch a view of Karaweik Hall, a reproduction of a royal barge and enjoy a spectacular view of the Golden Shwedagon Pagoda.

No Myanmar expedition can be considered truly great if it's lacking a visit to the legendary Shwedagon Pagoda. Ready for an amazing experience? The visual delights present there alone, are worth the trip. Begin at the eastern entrance to find a row of shops at the base of the temple selling various religious items. Here you will find monks robes, alms bowls, offerings, incense and other unique Buddhist objects. As you browse the stalls your guide will explain the use and rituals of Myanmar's Buddhist people. Then continue up the stairs to the main platform. Witness the colors transform on the 100-meter chedi which is literally enclosed in over 40 tons of gold leaf. Shwedagon is largely considered to be the most important religious site for the Burmese; most visitors report that the trip is

extremely memorable and still etched into their minds. Return to your hotel for a relaxing evening.

Day 8: Yangon – fly to Bagan (B)

After enjoying your breakfast, you will be transferred to the airport for your domestic flight to Bagan. Welcome to Bagan, known to be one of the greatest architectural sites in Asia. When Bagan was the centre of Myanmar from the 11th to 13th centuries the monarchs built multitudes of massive stupas and pagodas, scores of which are still present on the shores of the Irrawaddy River. The majesty of Bagan with more than 4000 red brick temples on a plain of the size of Manhattan island is one of the highlights of a Myanmar holiday that will soothe the eye of every traveller.

Discover the best of Bagan today! Not simply a chance to see the splendid Bagan temples, this excursion also introduces you to the Burmese culture, allows you to see traditional craftsmen at work and takes you up the mighty Irrawaddy River to a decidedly unusual ‘cave’ temple! Your first port of call is an elevated temple with its panoramic views of the Bagan plains. This viewpoint will give you a taste of the sheer number of temples as well as some of their distinctive styles. From here you will have a look around the Ananda Temple – one of the most exalted of Bagan’s temples. We will ensure that our tour reaches this point before the majority of tourists arrive, enabling you to enjoy the splendor of the temple in relative tranquility. Continue to various other temples dotted around the temple plains to experience a variety of architectural styles in the area as well as the artistic wonder of the 9-14th centuries. Traveling amid the temples you will get a taste of

rural Bagan life in this 'living museum' setting where farmers and families work amongst the monuments.

Next on the agenda is your chance to learn more about the local culture with a visit to two workshops producing Bagan's most famous products - lacquer ware and wood crafts. Watch in amazement as the skilled craftsmen use traditional techniques passed down through generations to create beautiful items.

OPTIONAL: USD8/PAX FOR SUNSET CRUISE (NO COCKTAIL)

You will be driven late in the afternoon to the jetty where a private wooden river boat awaits you. Sitting either under the shade or on the open-deck you'll be treated to fabulous views as you cruise down the Irrawaddy River. You'll cruise past several small villages, fishermen, local boats and of course many of the ubiquitous Myanmar Buddhist temples. The views of Bagan from the river are particularly spectacular and offer a different perspective from the land based tours. As the sun begins to sink slowly from view, you will prepare to disembark before being driven back, greatly relaxed, to your hotel for the evening. The perfect end to a busy day of sightseeing in Bagan!

Lunch and Dinner on own account. Overnight stay in Bagan.

Day 9: Bagan – Sightseeing (B)

OPTION: HOT AIR BALLOON RIDE OVER BAGAN– USD285/PAX FOR STANDARD SERVICE; USD360/PAX FOR PREMIUM SERVICE

The morning will start off with an exciting hot-air balloon ride above the Bagan countryside. You will observe one-of-a-kind views when the sun begins to rise over the Irrawaddy River and various stupas in the region. You're simply not going to

find many other opportunities like this on Earth. (Only available from October/November through March)

After breakfast at your hotel, your guide and driver will pick you up to start your Bagan excursion. It's off to the vibrant Nyaung Oo Market, where the locals come to trade fresh produce and other goods daily. From here you will have a look around the Old Bagan starting with a visit of the renowned Shwezigon Pagoda, constructed by King Anawrahta in the early 11th century as a religious memorial. Travel over dusty lanes and tree shaded roads past temples and monasteries to a small village. Explore the village on foot, getting a glimpse of local lifestyles of Bagan's residents. Continue to more lesser-known monuments, selected based on your interest, in the area for the remainder of the morning. If you wish, a short walk can be arranged through a series of smaller monuments which allows for a unique perspective of Bagan.

From here you will journey on by horse cart for an excursion that passes Thatbyinnyu, the tallest temple in Bagan, gigantic Dhammayangyi Temple noted for its remarkable brickwork, and of course, Sulamani Temple. Take pleasure in an extraordinary sunset from the upper terrace of one of the surrounding temples.

Lunch and Dinner on own account. Overnight stay in Bagan.

Day 10: Bagan – fly to Heho – Inle Lake (B)

After enjoying your breakfast you will be transferred to the airport (1 hour) for your domestic flight to Heho. From Heho, you will experience a lovely scenic one-hour drive (32km – 1 hour) which leads to NyaungShwe, gateway village to Inle Lake. Along the way, you will have an opportunity to visit rural workshops that

specialize in traditional Shan paper and unique handcrafted umbrellas. Upon reaching the edge of the lake, take a short orientation tour of NyaungShwe, a small town of narrow streets dotted with temples, monasteries, tea shops and local houses.

Then you will board a private motorboat and begin heading out onto Inle Lake, one of Myanmar's most spectacular and breathtaking sights. Its calm waters are dotted with floating vegetation and fishing canoes, to which scenic hills provide the perfect backdrop. Along the way you will pass several villages that are built on stilts over the lake, which are inhabited by the local Intha people. Observe the daily activities of the local leg-rowing fishermen and see their 'floating gardens', which are built up from strips of water hyacinth, earth and anchored to the bottom of the lake with bamboo poles. You will also visit NgaHpeChaung Monastery, which houses loads of early Shan Buddha Images. In the past this temple was known for its 'jumping cats' but these days there are only a few felines roaming around and none are jumping any more. Yet the Buddha images are still worth the visit.

Proceed to the PhaungDawOo Pagoda, the lake's main haven, which contains five sacred images of Buddha decorated in gold leaf. There are also many traditional crafts originating on Inle Lake and , should you wish, we can stop for a visit to one making incredible woven items from lotus silk, boat builders (depending on the time of year), a cigar making workshop, blacksmiths or even silver smiths. The day will come to a close with a return trip by boat back to your hotel.

Lunch and Dinner on own account. Overnight stay in Inle Lake

Day 11: Inle Lake – Indein (B)

After breakfast you'll pay a visit to the lake's morning market (the market is open every day apart from dark moon and full moon calendar days). The market's location rotates between the lake's villages in a 5 day schedule and is also visited daily by the lake's inhabitants as well as the surrounding natives who also come to sell and trade their wares.

A 1-hour boat ride down a small canal will take you to the Pa-Oh village of Indein, positioned on the western shores of Inle Lake. Take a leisurely stroll around the village before ascending a rural road to the top of a hill. Once you've arrived at the summit, you will be greeted by an iconic Buddha image which sits enshrined among hundreds of stupa ruins and overgrown shrubbery. Here, from the peak, you will also be rewarded with mesmerizing views of the placid surroundings. The Indein Pagoda complex is undoubtedly one of the most amazing sites around the shore of the lake and it consists of hundreds of small stupas which are overrun by moss and greenery. On your boat ride back, should time allow and if you wish, you'll stop at the Inthar Heritage House to learn more about the history and culture of the lake's indigenous people and enjoy a delicious coffee and cake (snack break not included).

Lunch and dinner on own account. Overnight stay in Inle Lake.

Day 12: Inle Lake – Heho – fly to Yangon – Departure (B)

Breakfast will be served at your hotel before driving by a combination of boat and car to the Heho Airport (1-1.5 hour) for a short flight back to Yangon. Upon arrival at Yangon airport move to the International Airport for your international connection to Bangkok. End of the trip. Thank you for using our service.